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INSTRUCTI

COMMANDING. MEDICAL
OFFICERS OF THE

AN OUTBREAK OF

ACTUALLY PREVENT
THE TROOP



INSTRUCTIONS

TO

COMMANDING, MEDICAL, AND OTHER
OFFICERS OF THE ARMY,

FOR THEIR GUIDANCE AT A TIME WHEN THERE IS REASON TO ANTICIPATE

AN OUTBREAK OF CHOLERA,

OR WHEN IT IS

ACTUALLY PREVALENT AMONG
THE TROOPS.

WAR DEPARTMENT, 1866.



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INSTRUCTIONS.

Officers whose duty it is to see to the health and comfort of the troops are especially required to exercise the utmost vigilance at a time when Cholera is prevalent, or when there is reason to believe an outbreak may be expected.

MEASURES TO BE ADOPTED IN ANTICIPATION OF A THREATENED INVASION OF EPIDEMIC CHOLERA IN MILITARY STATIONS.

1. Medical officers should make themselves acquainted with every arrangement of their corps, and the condition of every locality in and about the barracks, in order that they may be in a position to suggest, for the consideration of their Commanding Officers, not only improvements in ordinary matters, but arrangements of a more temporary character applicable to an exceptional period.

2. Nuisances should be removed and cleansing enforced *outside* barracks, by calling on local boards or persons entrusted with power to remove nuisances to put these in force.

3. As much space as is practicable should be afforded to each individual in barracks ; on this account any existing misappropriations should be restored to their proper use.

4. Ventilation of all the buildings should receive careful attention, not only by remedying structural defects, when practicable, but by enforcing the full use of the means of ventilation, in keeping open all apertures intended specially for ventilating purposes.

5. The instructions laid down in the Queen's Regulations regarding the cleansing and supervision of barrack rooms are to be carefully observed. The floors of the rooms should

not be washed in wet weather. The regular airing of bedding and its exposure out of doors in fine weather is to be attended to ; and if Epidemic Cholera appears in the country it would seem desirable to cleanse and limewash ceilings and walls of all barracks, hospitals, quarters, and stables.

6. All sewers, latrines, urinals, and ashpits should be inspected frequently, and their cleanliness ensured by an efficient system of frequent flushing and cleansing ; any accumulation in such places should be scrupulously removed, as it must be borne in mind that during the prevalence of an epidemic it is injudicious to disturb old accumulations. A free use of lime is enjoined.

7. Every source of water supply should be investigated, and the possibility of contamination, by percolation from sewage, or from surface impurities looked to ; an examination should be made of the water, and any such impurity detected in it should at once preclude its use for drinking or cooking purposes.

8. Attention is to be directed to the soldiers' rations, and care taken that they never fall below the standard quality, and the men are to be enjoined to be careful as to what they eat, and the purchase of any articles deemed indigestible or deleterious to health should be discouraged as much as possible.

9. As much variety as possible is to be afforded in the cooking of the rations.

10. The canteen is to be frequently visited, and its supplies carefully examined.

11. It is unnecessary for medical officers to recommend any change in the ordinary duties of the men, as long as they are not excessive, beyond suggesting the advisability of reducing the night duties to the minimum that the necessities of the station will permit, and pointing out to the Commanding Officer that any duty subjecting the men to wet clothes or wet feet should be avoided when possible, and, when such exposure is unavoidable, that the wet articles should be changed as speedily as possible.

12. Medical officers should make frequent inquiry as to the existence of diarrhoea amongst the men ; and in the event of affections of the bowels being prevalent should enjoin an immediate application to hospital for medicine, not necessarily with the view of the men being detained in hospital.

In addition to the foregoing instructions, when the disease has appeared among the inhabitants in the vicinity of a military station, or among the military of the station, the following are to be carefully attended to.

I. The occurrence of Cholera in places where troops are stationed is immediately to be reported to the Director-General by the principal or senior medical officer, without waiting for its appearance being officially announced by the local board of health.

II. A daily report, as accurate as can be obtained, of the progress of Cholera amongst the civil population where troops are stationed, will also be required from the principal or senior medical officer.

III. The men should be prohibited going into the infected districts, pickets could be placed to prevent them. It may be advisable to confine the troops to barracks, and prohibit any but the most necessary intercourse with persons outside.

IV. All families living out of barracks should be brought in, if it be possible to do so without overcrowding. If the season permitted, they might be encamped, or if there were danger of overcrowding, houses admitting of partial or complete isolation might be hired.

V. Men rejoining from furlough, or under any circumstances from a distance, or recruits arriving, are to be separated from the other men for at least a week.

VI. Good fires are to be provided in the barrack rooms to increase ventilation and to diffuse a cheerfulness, which last should be promoted in every way.

VII. Disinfectants, such as chloride of lime or zinc, preparations of carbolic acid, perchloride of iron, or other approved preparations, should be used in latrines, urinals, sewers, ashbins, and other similar places, twice daily. A non-commissioned officer with a fatigue party should be instructed in the performance of this duty, which is to be rigorously carried out, and either the Quarter-master or orderly officer should be responsible for its execution. Disinfectants will be obtained from the Barrack department on the spot.

VIII. Married men (if out of mess) should each be provided with a ration the same as the single men.

IX. The men are to be cautioned against intemperance and every means adopted to repress it, and night passes must be prohibited.

X. Tea or coffee is to be issued to the men before going

on morning or night duties; and every man to have his breakfast, if possible, before leaving his barrack room for parades or other duties.

XI. On the occurrence of a case of Cholera among the troops, a report is to be forwarded by the senior medical officer to the Director-General, and continued daily until further orders.

XII. Questions of importance not admitting of delay may be telegraphed to the Director-General by the principal medical officer.

XIII. On the appearance of Cholera in a corps, it should be camped out when practicable, provided the season of the year will permit of it; good ground should be selected beforehand, and arrangements made by the Quarter-master General's department.

XIV. Health inspections are to be made at morning and evening parades, and a daily inspection of every individual attached to the regiment, but the avoidance of all unnecessary alarm cannot be too strongly enjoined.

XV. Each soldier is to be provided with two cholera belts, as part of his necessaries. Flannel shirts ought also to be worn.

XVI. It has been found desirable, during the prevalence of Cholera, to boil and filter through charcoal all drinking water.

XVII. The minds of the men should as much as possible be occupied and amused. Every game or employment tending to recreation, or to induce healthy exercise, should be promoted. Occasional marches for short distances into the country, without arms, might be advisable.

XVIII. Diarrhoea should be most carefully attended to during the prevalence of Cholera, and non-commissioned officers are to be instructed to order all men to hospital whom they may detect suffering from looseness of the bowels. Sentries should be placed in the vicinity of the latrines, and men found going twice in quick succession to the rear should be sent to hospital immediately. It might be advantageous for the better detection of this usually painless affection, that tickets be provided for the men, and every time a man went to the rear one of them handed to the sentry; but a man not having his ticket should be allowed to pass, and his name reported to the orderly sergeant. A room for observation in hospital should be provided for such men, and their motions treated as in the case of Cholera patients. Medicine is to be kept prepared for issue to such cases, day and night, and to avoid delay,

a supply should be placed in the hands of non-commissioned officers in barracks to be exhibited to men while preparing to go to hospital.

XIX. The place whence a patient is taken from barracks is to be thoroughly washed, the bedding and bedstead removed, and fumigation made by chlorine or nitrous acid gas. The barrack bedding is to be removed with Cholera or suspicious cases to the hospital.

XX. If however it is found that any preponderance of cases of Cholera or diarrhoea occurs in any building or room, the medical officers should carefully examine the locality, with a view to detecting or remedying any insanitary condition; should such be appreciable either in the building or its vicinity, the building or room should be vacated and fumigated with chlorine, nitrous, or sulphurous acid fumes, and the walls and floors scraped and cleansed, and the former lime-washed before re-occupation.

XXI. When cases occur in camp, the ground should if possible be changed, as so successfully practised in India, but where this may be impracticable, as would usually be the case at home, the tents should be struck, and the ground cleansed and aired before re-pitching them.

XXII. If the troops are not camped out, the regimental hospital is to be appropriated to the treatment of Cholera, and the ordinary cases of sickness accommodated in barracks, in rooms set apart and equipped for the purpose; or where this cannot be done, in a hired house; an application for carrying out the latter arrangement being previously submitted to the Director-General. Should the troops be encamped, all the sick will be treated in tents, the tents for Cholera patients being placed in an isolated position.

XXIII. Medical officers are to visit their hospitals frequently. They will be required to be always available for any sudden call on their services, and when Cholera prevails in the corps, they are not to leave the barracks, except under imperative necessity.

XXIV. Great caution is advisable in the use of medicines of a purgative character, during the prevalence of the disease.

XXV. Cases among the wives and children of soldiers are to be treated in the female hospital, where such institutions exist, provided the regiment is not camped out. In stations where there is no female hospital, application should be made to the proper authorities for a room to be allotted or accommodation to be hired.

XXVI. The women should be warned that if they or

their children are attacked with diarrhoea they must at once go to hospital.

XXVII. The patients' barrack bedding is to be used in hospital. The purveyor will provide paillasses and pillows with straw in the event of a change being requisite. All the hair mattresses and pillows are to be removed from the hospital, to equip the rooms set apart for the treatment of the ordinary cases of sickness when Cholera attacks the troops.

XXVIII. When the barrack bedding is no longer required for use, the straw is to be burnt, and the bedding disinfected, and treated in accordance with paragraph 7, page 40, Medical Regulations (boiling water being used). The foregoing is applicable to hospital sheets, blankets, clothing, and other such articles of hospital equipment as may be used. But such portions of the soldier's kit as cannot be so treated should be exposed to the air and sun for a week, fumigated, and beaten. It would be advisable not to take them into use until the epidemic had quite ceased.

XXIX. The stools and vomit should be passed into vessels and deodorized, at once removed, and carefully buried deep, and at a distance from the possibility of percolation to any water supply, or a latrine could be set apart into which they could be thrown, which should not for the time being be used for any other purpose; and care should be taken that no other latrine or water-closet is so used.*

XXX. The attendants upon Cholera patients should not be taken from this special work to attend on other cases of disease so long as Cholera exists in the barracks or hospital. They are to be enjoined to wash their hands well whenever they have been in contact with the discharges of the sick.

XXXI. Corpses are to be removed to the dead-house without delay, buried as soon as possible, but never conveyed to the graveyard on men's shoulders.

XXXII. Post-mortem examinations are to be performed in such cases and under such modifications as may be necessary.

By Order of the Secretary of State for War,
EDWARD LUGARD.

* NOTE.—The power of the dissemination of Cholera by means of the excreta, is now so generally believed, and has been advocated by so many eminent members of the medical profession, that it cannot be overlooked in considering preventive measures at the present day.

